whether the official language policy is being followed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c). As per information made available by the 20 nationalised banks, the requisite information is as follows:

(a) 443

(b) 389

(c) 310

Fund for Welfare of Defence Personnel

729. SHRI SWAMI SURESHANAND: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to create a separate fund for the welfare of jawans and officers of Defence services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Ballot Papers for Armed Forces Personnel

730. SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM:
SHRI RAJESH KUMAR:
SHRI TEJ NARAYAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that ballot papers meant for Army, Navy and Air Force personnel are always dispatched late and these personnel are not able to cast their votes as a result thereof;

(b) if so, the total number of personnel in each wing who could not exercise their franchise during the last general elections;

(c) whether the Government propose to take any step in this regard to ensure the dispatch of ballot papers in such cases in time so that the service personnel can cast their votes;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) The ballot papers meant for the Defence Service voters are normally despatched to them by the concerned Service authorities within 24 hours of their receipt from the respective Returning Officers. However, sometimes there are delays in despatch of ballot papers to the Service Officers due to unavoidable circumstances viz., the late receipt of ballot papers from the Returning Officers, inadequate/ erroneous details of the voters etc.

(b) No details are available with the respective authorities regarding the number of voters who could not exercise their franchise during the last General Elections (May-June 1991).

(c) to (e). Instructions are issued from time to time to the concerned Service authorities to timely complete all formalities, including the registration of voters and the despatch of postal ballot papers to Service personnel. The Election Commission have also been requested by the Ministry of De-

fence to ensure the timely despatch of the postal ballot papers by the Returning Officers to the respective Defence Service authorities.

[*English*]

Irregularities by Foreign Exchange Operators

731. SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:
SHRI ATALBIHARI VAJPAYEE:
SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has investigated 'banking irregularities' amounting to about Rs. 300 crores by some foreign exchange operators using the 'Rouble Route';

(b) if so, the findings thereof and action taken against the persons found guilty in this regard; and

(c) the flaws detected in the Foreign Exchange (Immunities) Scheme which has been misused?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that during inspection of some banks maintaining non-convertible rupee accounts, it came to light that in some cases, funds received form bilateral group of countries in non-convertible rupees were converted to NRE account and for part of such funds, immunities were claimed and given under the Foreign Exchange (Immunity) Scheme, 1991. The banks which had allowed these transactions have been advised to (i) cancel the immunity certificates issued against funds received in non-convertible rupees; and (ii) to investigate the matter and fix responsibility on the officials concerned. RBI have also advised other banks and authorised dealers to investigate such transactions to ensure that no irregularities have taken place.

(c) The instructions given to the banks and authorised dealers in regard to provisions of Foreign Exchange (Immunity) Scheme, 1991, were very clear and no immunity was to be granted in respect of amounts received from bilateral group of countries in non-convertible rupees.

Pending Cases in Bombay

732. SHRI SHANKARRAO KALE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases pending in the Bombay High Court for more than five years; and

(b) the steps being taken to expedite the disposal of such cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTERS OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b). As on 30.6.91, the number of cases pending in the Bombay High Court for more than five years was 44831. Having regard to the need for expeditious disposal of old pending case, the Bombay High Court have informed that due priority is being assigned to such cases and, as far as possible, these are posted for hearing before the Judges who are not burdened with admission or other miscellaneous work. Further cases involving common question of law are being grouped together and posted before the same Bench to the extent feasible.